



Wildlands Update: Early Winter 2010

Alaska Public Lands Information Center

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Here**

Road Closures

The Denali Highway is now closed to vehicles. There is quite a bit of construction going on this fall, be prepared for delays and detours. There are lane closures at milepost 287 of the Richardson Highway with long delays expected until the end of October. Use caution and be aware of flaggers at the Tok Cut-off at Gakona River, milepost 2. Road construction along the Taylor Highway is scheduled through the end of the year, be alert for flaggers and pilot car operations. The Taylor Highway is closed at milepost 105 to Eagle. Convoys are scheduled; call the Taylor Highway Hotline (907) 322-3844.

For more information on road conditions visit <http://511.alaska.gov> or call 511.

Winter Camping

Most campgrounds across the state allow walk-in camping, but no water or facilities are available.

Alaska State Parks

Most campgrounds and boat launches are available for use until snowfall closes them to vehicles. Fees for sites are not charged after the water well pump handle is pulled for the season. Only three campgrounds are closed by entrance gates: Chena River SRS in Fairbanks, Tok River SRS near Tok, and Rosehip Campground in the Chena River State Recreation Area.

For specific parks, go to <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/asp/close.htm>

Chugach National Forest

Cooper Creek and Porcupine Campgrounds are now closed. All other campgrounds will remain open without fees or facilities until snowfall. Once closed, they will remain open for walk-ins.

Denali National Park and Preserve

All campgrounds, with the exception of Riley Creek Campground are closed for the season. Nightly fees are not charged until mid-May, but there is an entrance fee into the park. Veteran's Day, November 11, is a fee-free day.

Kenai National Wildlife Refuge

Campgrounds are open during the winter season, but are without services.

Remember to pack out what you pack in when winter camping. Visit the Leave No Trace page on AlaskaCenters.gov for suggestions.

Campground Hosts

Apply early to be a campground host for summer 2011. Popular spots go quickly.

Alaska State Parks:

www.dnr.alaska.gov/parks/vip/geninfo.htm

Kenai National Wildlife Refuge:

<http://kenai.fws.gov/workwithus/cghosts.htm>

Chugach National Forest:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/chugach>

Bureau of Land Management:

(907) 822-3217

Preparing for Winter Recreation

Once snow falls, public lands can be enjoyed via snowmachine, skis, dogsleds and snow-shoes. Check out classes on avalanche safety, winter biking, and skiing at REI. The Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation also has special events and classes listed in the Fall Activity Guide. To find out more information on classes visit:

<http://www.rei.com/stores/16>

<http://www.muni.org/departments/parks>

Firewood

State Lands: Firewood is available in the Mat-Su Valley and Kenai Peninsula. Maps and permits are available at <http://forestry.alaska.gov>

Chugach National Forest: Click on the quicklinks at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/chugach>

Kenai National Wildlife Refuge:

visit <http://kenai.fws.gov/current.htm>

Alaska State Parks

Chugach State Park

Snow has yet to be seen at lower elevations, but the trails are in great shape to enjoy fall weather. Most trailheads are open year-round, but call park headquarters at (907) 345-0514 for current conditions. Public use cabins in Eagle River Valley and Eklutna are available to rent year-round.

To find a cabin visit:

<http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/cabins>

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Independence Mine State Historical Park

The visitor center and park are closed for the season. The valley and surrounding area will open to hiking, skiing and snowmachining as snow depth allows. The road over the pass is now closed. For further information or questions, contact the Finger Lake Headquarters at (907) 745-3975.

Denali State Park

There are three cabins in the park, all of which can be used year-round. Byers Lake campground is also open, but facilities are limited. Troublesome Creek Trail is closed due to severe flooding, but all other trails are open. For more information, call (907) 745-3975 or go to <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/units/denali1.htm>

National Park Service

Most of the National Parks in Alaska are open year-round, with limited services provided and reduced visitor center hours. To find out information on a specific park visit: <http://www.nps.gov/alaska>

Kenai Fjords National Park

The Seward Information Center and Exit Glacier Nature Center are both closed until May 2011. Kenai Fjords is open year-round; however, Exit Glacier road is closed to cars for the winter months, with access by dog sled, skis or snowmachines only when snow allows. There are no boat tours operating this winter. Willow Cabin at Exit Glacier is available to rent once the snow closes the road to the glacier. For reservations and more information on winter opportunities, call (907) 442-0500 or visit <http://nps.gov/kefj>

Denali National Park and Preserve

The Park Road is open for private vehicles as far as mile 5 until November 24th. After that date the road is plowed only to mile 3 at Park Headquarters. The main visitor center is now closed, but the Murie Science and Learning Center will be open daily from 9am-4pm and offers winter exhibits and the park movie by request. Riley Creek Campground is open and nightly fees are not charged until mid-May, but there is an entrance fee for the park. Check out the Alpenglow winter edition online. For more information call (907) 683-2294 or visit <http://nps.gov/dena>

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve

With winter just around the corner, services and facilities are limited, however, the park is open year-round. The Wrangell-St. Elias Visitor Center and Park Headquarters, along with Yakutat Ranger Station are open year-round with winter hours 8:00am

- 4:30pm, Monday - Friday. All other visitor centers at Kennecott, Chitina, and McCarthy will re-open on Memorial Day. The Slana Ranger Station is open during the winter, but call ahead at (907) 822-7401. Also, Nabesna Road is open year-round. For more information visit <http://nps.gov/wrst>

National Forests Chugach and Tongass National Forests

Camping, hiking, and recreation cabins are available year-round. Plan early for weekends and holidays. For availability, <http://recreation.gov> For more information, call (907) 743-9500.

Fish and Wildlife Service Kenai National Wildlife Refuge

The visitor center is open weekdays 8 am to 4:30 pm and Saturdays 10 am to 5 pm. There is still time to do some day hikes and camping in the refuge before snow comes, and there are great trails for cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmachining afterward. To learn more about activities and cabin rentals in the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, call (907) 262-7021 or visit <http://kenai.fws.gov/visit.htm>



Fall is breeding season for moose, and one of the few times moose form small groups. Be careful... during rut, bulls can be extremely aggressive and dangerous.

Southcentral Visitor Centers

Eagle River Nature Center

Located at the end of the Eagle River Road, the Nature Center is open Friday-Sunday 10am-5pm during the winter. A variety of programs are offered as well as themed holiday adventure hikes. Parking is \$5 per visit (not covered by the Alaska State day use pass). For more information call (907) 694-2108 or visit their website at <http://www.ernc.org>

Campbell Creek Science Center

Fireside chats and Science Saturday programs begin Oct. 16th. The chats start at 7pm and are free while the Saturday programs have a fee and are geared towards kids (8-13 years old). To learn more, call (907) 267-1247 or visit the BLM website at <http://blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/sciencecenter.htm>

Alaska Islands and Ocean Visitor Center - Homer

The center is open Tuesday-Saturday 12pm-5pm. There is no admission fee to use any of the facilities and trails around the center. It is a great place to get oriented to Homer and learn about the "natural treasures of the reserve and the refuge." For more information call (907) 235-6961 or visit <http://islandsandocean.org>

Begich-Boggs Visitor Center

Begich-Boggs Visitor Center is open on weekends from 10am-5pm. This center is a gorgeous place to view the glacial scenery of Southcentral Alaska. For current information about weather and conditions, contact the Glacier Ranger District at (907) 783-3242 or the Seward Ranger District at (907) 224-3374.

Alaska Public Lands Information Centers

<http://alaskacenters.gov>
Toll Free (866) 869-6887

Anchorage Alaska Public Lands

Information Center: Located in downtown Anchorage and open weekdays 10am-5pm. Stop by for trip planning, scavenger hunts, and exhibits about Alaska. Our list of movies and more information about the center can be found on the website or by calling (866) 869-6887 or (907) 644-3661.

Fairbanks Alaska Public Lands

Information Center: Open Monday-Saturday 9am-5pm. Situated in the Morris Thompson Cultural Center, the exhibits and weekly programs will interest kids and adults alike. For more information on winter programs, visit the website or call (907) 459-3730.

Tok Alaska Public Lands Information

Center: Sitting right on the border with Canada, it is open weekdays from 8am-4:30pm. For more information, call (907) 883-5667.

Southeast Alaska Public Lands

Information Center: This center in Ketchikan is open Monday through Friday 10am-3pm. The center has a newly remodeled exhibit rooms, info for trip planning, and movies. To receive more information, call (907) 228-6220 or visit the website.

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